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REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the consideration given the present application and the courtesy extended Applicants' representative during the telephone conference held on or around April 8, 2009, during which the phrase "consisting essentially of" was discussed. As discussed below, it is understood that this language avoids the disclosure in U.S. 4,599,289 to Suematsu et al. of 70-100% of a vinylidene chloride-acrylonitrile copolymer.

While not acquiescing to any ground of rejection, but merely to expedite prosecution, claim 1 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 2 which, along with non-elected claims 10-13, is cancelled. Accordingly, the objection to claims 7 and 8 as being of improper dependent form, as well as the rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite, are rendered moot.

In addition, Applicants traverse and request reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1, 2, and 6 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable the Suematsu reference.

Amended independent claim 1 is directed to a thin-film coated toner having a combination of elements, including a powder toner, with a softening temperature ranging from 50-150°C, a surface of the powder toner being coated substantially continuously with the thin film comprising a urea-base thermosetting resin, wherein the powder toner is a ground toner, and the urea-base resin is formed by resinifying a urea-base resin precursor mixture consisting essentially of at least either one of a urea and a urea derivative and at least either one of a formaldehyde and formaldehyde derivative on the surface of the powder toner, while avoiding fusing the powder toner.

Suematsu does not disclose or suggest a thin-film coated toner having the above-noted combination of elements, including a urea-base resin precursor mixture that consists essentially of at least either one of a urea and a urea derivative and at least

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either one of a formaldehyde and formaldehyde derivative on the surface of the powder toner, while avoiding fusing the powder toner.

Specifically, at column 3, lines 54 and 55, Suematsu discloses 70-100 percent of a vinylidene chloride-acrylonitrile copolymer whereas, as noted, Applicants' amended independent claim 1 calls for a urea-base resin formed by resinifying a urea-base resin precursor mixture that consists essentially of at least either one of a urea and a urea derivative and at least either one of a formaldehyde and formaldehyde derivative on the surface of the powder toner, while avoiding fusing the powder toner. Applicants' claim language avoids the Suematsu disclosure of 70-100 percent of a vinylidene chloride-acrylonitrile copolymer.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that amended independent claim 1, and the claims dependent thereon, are allowable, and prompt passage to issue is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary during prosecution, Applicants hereby request any required extension of time not otherwise requested and hereby authorize the Commissioner to charge any required fee not intentionally omitted, including application processing, extension, extra claims, statutory disclaimer, issue, and publication fees, to Deposit Account No. 06-1135 with respect to Order No. 7398-88327.

Respectfully submitted,

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